

# The Chassidische Vibe

THE BEIS MOSHIACH MAGAZINE  
FOR N'SHEI U'VNOS CHABAD

## "An American Born Girl!"

Interview with  
Mrs. Bassie Garelik,  
shlucha to Milan, Italy

## My 3 Times in Yechidus With the Rebbe

Rebbetzin Sima Ashkenazi

## Us & Them

When Family Standards Clash

## Project: Our Pesach Kitchen

Recipes for cooking and thinking by

## Pesach Cleaning Is Not Over!

Rochel Brown • Sara Gopin • Yehudis Hornick • Raizel Liberow



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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## Us & Them

Dear Readers,

While the power of many is immeasurable, it is crucial to never lose sight of the individual. The single child in a large family. The single student in a busy classroom. The single friend needing our support. Even on the night we became a nation, preparing to leave Mitzrayim, we didn't bring a communal sacrifice. Instead we sat down for an intimate family supper.

So although Pesach is about the nation, we take the time to focus on the individual. On the individual coming to the Rebbe for a Yechidus (Pg 4). On our individual calm disposition and good mood (Pg 42). On our individual spiritual growth (Pg 32). And of course on the individual recipes that gather our family around the Yom Tov table again and again.

May this Zman Cheirusainu be a time of personal freedom and freedom for all of Klal Yisrael with the revelation of Moshiach now

*The Editors*

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**BEIS MOSHIACH**





The Rebbe  
Told Us:

“

# Your Nachas Is My Nachas

”

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan,  
Rebbetzin Sima Ashkenazi of  
Kfar Chabad, wife of Rabbi  
Mordechai Shmuel a"h,  
shares moving personal  
yechidus encounters with the  
Rebbe with guiding instructions  
that led her securely through  
life, instructions that are  
relevant to this day to the  
individual as well as to  
women in general.



## I WENT TO THE REBBE MANY TIMES

I went with and without my husband a'h; he always made it possible for me to go. Sometimes, he stayed with half of the children and the other half stayed with my mother with the help of my older girls. My husband would always tell me, "Go to the Rebbe."

The first time we traveled was after the birth of my oldest daughter. Our financial situation was very poor. I received a check from Bituach Leumi (Israel's social security agency) for three months maternity leave and he said, "I'm giving the money to a gemach and when we want it, they'll give it to us right away. You have half a ticket to go to the Rebbe!"

I immediately responded, "I have an infant. How can I go to the Rebbe?" He said, "You'll go, b'ezras Hashem."

Ten and a half months later I gave birth to my second daughter and once again I received a check. My husband said, "Sima, you now have a full ticket to the Rebbe. I'm not going to spend this money either."

The money was enough for one ticket. The Yomim Tovim were coming up and he encouraged me, "Have you ever seen a woman who has a ticket to the Rebbe and she doesn't go? As for the babies, leave one with each grandmother and go."

I said to him, "What about you? You haven't been to the Rebbe for three years ..."

He said, "I work in a yeshiva and can go during the year but you are a morah and can only go for the Yomim Tovim. You'll miss only a few days of work. I will ask Rabbi Chefer and I'm sure he'll say it's okay."

R' Chefer was very happy about it and said he would take a substitute for the few days and I should certainly make the trip.

I was still unsure about whether to go and leave my husband as the babysitter; it didn't sit well with me. I wrote to the Rebbe that I have money for the trip, a place to leave the children, permission from the seminary (the Rebbe was particular about not abandoning children/students and not going into debt and getting permission from those directing the school) but my husband hadn't been there in three years, since before we married, and the question was who should go.

I did not bring up the idea of our traveling together since that wasn't possible as we did not have the means. A trip in those days cost a half a year's salary! The Rebbe sent us a "general letter" for 12 Tammuz and added in his handwriting on the bottom: As far as visiting here (since the children will be settled) you can both travel." That was a dream!

The timing of the letter was also amazing. I took the girls to the beach and my daughter played with the key and it remained there. I arrived home with the babies and couldn't find the key. The house was locked, nobody could be seen on the street, my husband was in yeshiva, there were no phones, and how could I tell him to come and open the door for me? He was going to come home first in the evening. I thought, maybe I can get from the porch to the living room, maybe I didn't lock the shutters. I climbed on to the porch and it was locked too.

The girls were under a tree, two babies, one was one year old and one was two and I was up above and could not get down. Help!

Just so you understand how desolate the area was, when I would sit there Friday night and wait for my husband, I would hear the jackals



and foxes. Our house was the last one and all around, it was barren.

I couldn't jump from the porch and I didn't know what would happen. Suddenly, I saw my husband in the distance, walking toward the house and waving, "The letter arrived!"

The postman had come to the house and since we were not at home, he went to the yeshiva. With a letter from the Rebbe you don't wait for the next day! When my husband got the letter he immediately ran home during the lunch break to bring it to me.

So, boruch Hashem, he opened the door and we brought up the children.

Now, with instructions like that, my husband tried to get a cheap ticket and managed, with the money that we had, to buy two. And that is how we both went.

At that time, traveling in the early morning was unusual; people would only travel at convenient times, and this was a flight with a plane that came from the Far East and had a stopover

in Israel. We went to London and spent two days there and then there was a charter from "Lubavitch House" that we joined and eventually returned with too, spending a night in London with R' Sholom Stroks. The following day we returned to Eretz Yisrael with the same plane that flew to the Far East.

We spent the entire Tishrei from erev Shabbos Nitzavim until after Shabbos Bereishis.

Fifty-two years ago, people hardly traveled. That year, when I traveled, there were four women from the Kfar at the Rebbe. There was the wife of Rabbi Leibov, the director of Tzeirei Chabad, who always joined him; the mother of Batya Kaminetzky, Mrs. Riva Raskin, who had just come out of Russia and the Rebbe invited them; and the winner of N'Shei Chabad's raffle, Mrs. Levin, mother of Luba Hertzl, and myself.

## THE FIRST YECHIDUS

The entire Tishrei was dreamlike. We had three private audiences. In the first one, we spent half an hour with the Rebbe. Before we

**// WE WERE THERE FOR HALF AN HOUR AND THE REBBE SPOKE TO US ABOUT MANY THINGS THAT WE HAD NOT WRITTEN IN OUR NOTE, ABOUT COMMUNAL AND GENERAL MATTERS. WE LEFT THE ROOM AND WERE YELLED AT. WE DEFENDED OURSELVES, "THE REBBE ASKED QUESTIONS AND SPOKE AND WHAT COULD WE DO?"**

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went in, Rabbi Groner, who was standing near the door, said, "You know that we are related?"

I said, "Of course I know and I hope you won't throw us out in the middle of the yechidus!" because I had seen how he had taken someone before us out of the room. I was afraid he would do the same to us.

He said that every person has four minutes and since we were two people, we had eight minutes. "After eight minutes I open the door and after ten minutes, you are out!"

Indeed, after eight minutes, he opened the door and the Rebbe motioned to him to close it. After another eight minutes, he opened the door again, and this happened three times. We were there for half an hour and the Rebbe spoke to us about many things that we had not written in our note, about communal and general matters. We left the room and were yelled at. We defended ourselves, "The Rebbe asked questions and spoke and what could we do?" They said to us, "You should have told the Rebbe that you would answer in writing."

However, there was one thing that the Rebbe did not speak to us about. We had written the names of our girls and asked for a bracha for them and the Rebbe did not mention them at

all. I said, "We came from overseas and asked for a bracha for the girls and the Rebbe did not address this at all, did not mention them and did not bless them. How can that be?"

My husband reassured me and said, "We just arrived." It was the Aseres Yimei Teshuva. "It will be a long time until we go home and we will go back in again and the Rebbe will give his parting bracha." That sat well with me and I calmed down.

## THE SECOND YECHIDUS

It was the day of our return trip and I said to my husband, "You said we would go in again!" He went over to R' Groner who began to yell at us. "You had half an hour! There are people who came who did not have yechidus at all. There is a special yechidus during the daytime for those who did not have yechidus the entire month and you want to go in again?!"

My husband said, "He is right; there is nothing to talk about."

"What about a bracha for the girls?" I insisted. My husband suggested that I write to the Rebbe that we are leaving. I wanted to write that we request yechidus but my husband said no. "We are not circumventing the secretaries. Write that we are traveling and want a parting bracha and maybe the Rebbe will give us a bracha in writing."

I wrote that we were leaving that evening with the charter flight and with all our heart we wanted a parting bracha. Suddenly, R' Chodakov came over to my husband and said that the Rebbe said to come in again.

R' Groner warned, "Without a note ..."

"Of course. I didn't even ask to go in..."

We went in and the Rebbe had time. He began speaking about my husband's sefer again and said an amazing thing to me, but I have to first provide background.



After the second birth, I was very weak and suffered greatly. I had two babies and worked. My husband said I must rest and I said, “Soon we will have the big [summer] vacation and I will rest.”

Came vacation time and along with it the gathering of N’Shei Chabad. Every night I was at meetings and took on jobs. My husband reminded me, “You said you would rest and soon school will be starting again and you did not rest at all.” I told him that what I had committed to for the kinus I had to do and after the kinus I would take a break and rest. Then we traveled to the Rebbe. I did not say a word to the Rebbe about resting.

Suddenly, the Rebbe looked at me and smiled and said, “It’s good that your husband is here,” and said he knew that before I married I had been very successful in communal work. Then he looked at my husband and said, “Now that the essential thing has been added, which is akeres ha’bayis (mainstay of the home), you need to ensure that the main thing does not interfere with the communal work.”

That was open ruach ha’kodesh. (When we returned home, my husband began to ask, “When do you have meetings?” He was afraid lest I undermine the communal work because of the need to rest. We no longer spoke about rest.)

At that parting yechidus, the Rebbe spoke about this and about the sefer. Then, although we went in without a note, and we did not mention the girls, the Rebbe gave such a bracha and said a line that we never heard that the Rebbe said to anyone: “Your nachas is my nachas.”

So I always tell my students and daughters that the Rebbe said, what looks to us like nachas is the Rebbe’s nachas. That means that if we are not fully on board with something and we think that a certain behavior is not right, that indicates that if we do not have nachas, then the Rebbe does not have nachas either!

The Rebbe added, “Soon you will surely come in again.” We looked at one another uncomprehendingly. Seeing our bewilderment,

the Rebbe explained. “There is the general yechidus of all residents of Kfar Chabad.”

My husband asked, “Is that just for men?”

The Rebbe said, “There is also the woman who won the raffle,” and he instructed that I call her and come in together. Since there were four women, I quickly let them know and we all went in. The men stood inside and we stood near the closed door. The Rebbe said he would say things that pertain to men and to women. The men would convey it to the men and the women to the women.

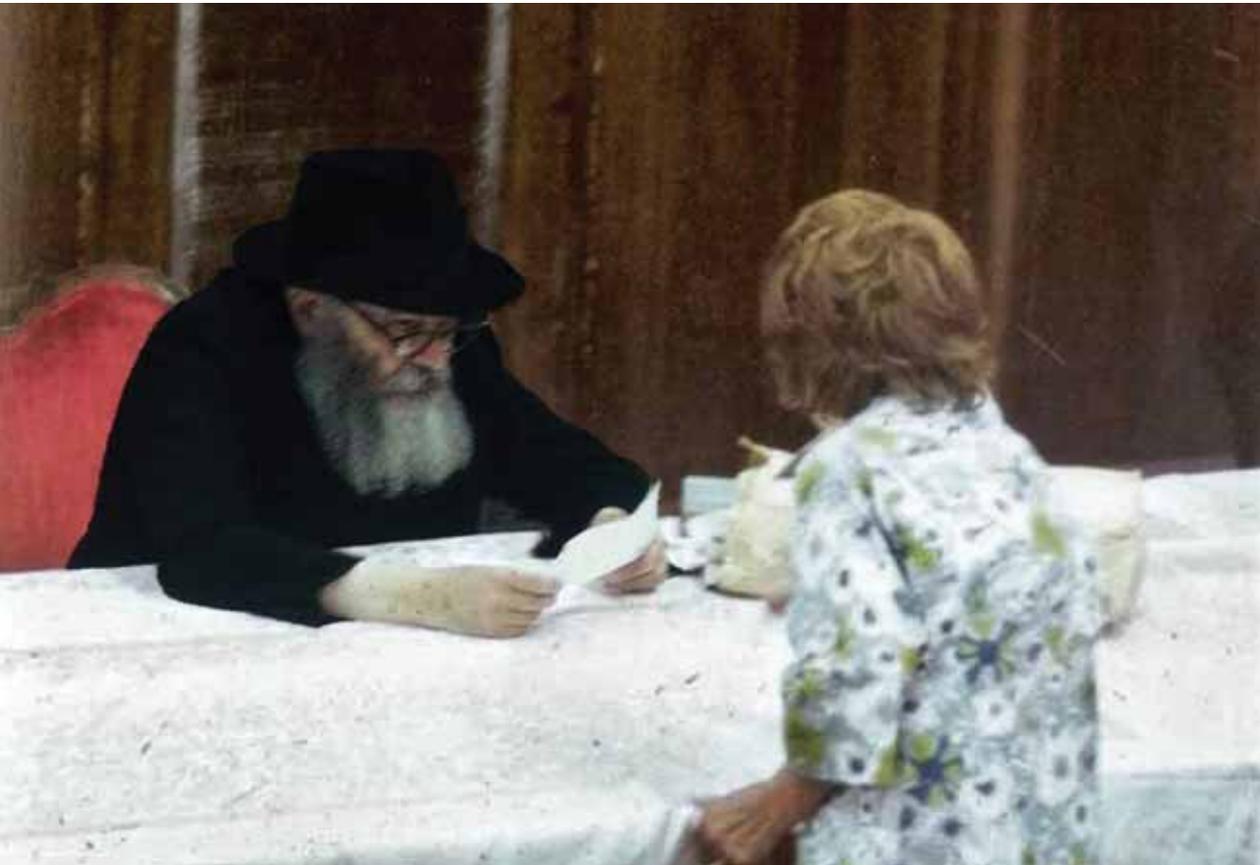
This was the only time that women also had yechidus for residents of Kfar Chabad. And that is how we had yechidus three times.

### THE TEST OF TRUE FEAR OF HEAVEN

During the yechidus, something very interesting happened. The Rebbe asked me, “What happened at the meeting with R’ Chefer?”

I was working at the seminary and R’ Shmuel Chefer held a meeting and invited the mothers of the Kfar. He had many complaints about the girls and he blamed the parents for if they spoke more positively about the school and the hanhala, the girls would hear this and behave differently. Naturally, the parents blamed the school and not themselves. The Rebbe was asking me what happened at the meeting where I was present in my role as teacher (I taught Tanach, history and English in the vocational school and in the seminary I taught hashkafa which later evolved into “Bayis Ha’Yehudi.”)

I faced the Rebbe and the Rebbe looked at the desk and listened. I said that R’ Chefer told the parents that they are to blame for the chinuch of the girls, and the parents ... I wanted to say that they claimed the opposite. I said the word, “parents” and the Rebbe looked up and gave me a look and did not allow me to



complete the sentence. He said, “Certainly they are at fault, certainly they are at fault.”

The Rebbe wanted to convey the tremendous responsibility that parents have for their children’s chinuch.

The next topic was the Rebbe asked me about the yiras shomayim of the women and girls of Kfar Chabad. I did not answer. I was 21 and did not feel that I could speak about the yiras shomayim of others.

The Rebbe immediately began to explain that the touchstone for yiras shomayim is *tznius* and *tahara*. He said that when I returned, together with Penina Slonim we should divide the Kfar into home study groups to learn these subjects. The Rebbe said the young ones did not absorb it and perhaps the older ones forgot ... So we should learn!

That is when they seriously began teaching these subjects in the Kfar and from there the instruction went to the rest of the country and the world, from that instruction that I was given that older and younger women and girls should study *tahara* and *tznius*.

### THE THIRD PRIVATE YECHIDUS

Eight years later, on 10 Shevat 5737, I was back at the Rebbe, this time on my own. I had come for the wedding of my sister-in-law and I had a very interesting yechidus. It wasn’t a communal issue but a personal matter, and the Rebbe literally entered into my soul...

It was amazing. I entered the room for yechidus and was very keyed-up. The previous time I had been with my husband and “leaned on him,” so to say. I wasn’t on my own. This time, I felt that all the brachos that I wanted to receive from the Rebbe I had to obtain on my own and I was tense.

The Rebbe looked at me and I want to mention that at this yechidus you were no longer allowed to talk to the Rebbe. At that time already, you went in with a pidyon nefesh and

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said nothing. There were those who had yechidus after me who had sent a note to the Rebbe in the morning with all their questions and the Rebbe answered in writing. That means, when they went in to the Rebbe, there were no questions; only brachos. They would write a pidyon nefesh for those for whom they wanted a bracha and the Rebbe would give a bracha and they were out in a minute. There was such a large crowd that it was impossible to allow any more than that.

I had a question about teaching. I had six children including a baby and my husband had accepted the rabbanus. Over the years, he had cared for the babies while I taught. I would go in the morning and he would stay with the baby and when I came back, he would go to yeshiva. But when this baby was born, my husband was already the rav and I wondered what would be. I could not take a babysitter and there was no daycare center and to take a baby out to a babysitter in the cold and rain was not for me. I was very conservative and did not take children under a year and seven months out of the house. So what would be?

CONT. ON P. 21

**"An American Born Girl,**  
who gave up all the amenities  
to join her husband in a  
Yiddishkeit in Italy."

— The Rebbe describing Mrs.  
Garelik in a 5722 (1962) letter



# ties of American life mission to spread

At the end of the fifties, **when shlichus was in its infancy**, you could count the number of shluchim on the fingers of one hand. **Among the pioneers were Rabbi and Mrs. Gershon Mendel a"h and Bassie 'nn Garelik**. They were sent on shlichus in Kislev 5719 by the Rebbe to Milan, Italy, without their knowing a word of Italian.

**In a special interview to The Chassidishe Vibe**, Mrs. Garelik tells us about her shlichus at the side of her great husband who passed away recently

## AT THE END OF THE FIFTIES,

when the phenomenon of shlichus was in its infancy, you could count the number of shluchim, who had volunteered, with mesirus nefesh and noteworthy courage, on the fingers of one hand.

It was the post-Holocaust era, when the Jewish nation was still licking its wounds from the tragedy it had recently undergone. The Rebbe was surrounded primarily by Chassidim who were war survivors or those who had left communist Russia. After finally settling down in a free country, near their beloved Rebbe, nobody wanted to leave. In addition, the idea of shlichus was still daring and revolutionary and there was no Shluchim Office not to mention a Kinus HaShluchim or veteran shluchim with whom to consult.

The few who agreed to jump into the water were unique, giants of the spirit, within whom burned a holy fire and who were infused with an intense spirit of hiskashrus and total devotion to the Rebbe. They were the pioneers who paved the way for the many who followed them, and together they built a global empire extending to every corner of the globe. An empire that today carries upon its broad and powerful shoulders all of world Jewry.

Among the pioneers were Rabbi and Mrs. Gershon Mendel a'h and Bassie Garelik. They were sent on shlichus in Kislev 5719 by the Rebbe to Milan, Italy, without their knowing a word of Italian.

“In those days, traveling to Italy was like traveling to the moon,” says Rebbetzin Garelik, “but we received my parents’ blessings, which itself was rare at the time, and although we did not know where we were going and what

awaited us there, we set out wholeheartedly and filled with joy as the Rebbe wanted.”

## WHAT AN AMERICAN GIRL CAN ACCOMPLISH

The Rebbe derived much nachas from the young shluchim. On a number of occasions he noted their mesirus nefesh. For example, when they opened Camp Gan Yisrael, the first in Europe, the Rebbe spoke about them (mentioning R' Garelik by name) at a farbrengen with great admiration. He referred to the American girl and Russian boy who arrived without anything and already accomplished more than all the askanim in Europe.

Another example of esteem can be seen in the correspondence of the Rebbe with the artist Jacques Lipchitz. In 5722, Lipchitz moved to Italy and the Rebbe suggested that he be in touch with the shluchim in Milan, Rabbi and Rebbetzin Garelik. In the letter, the Rebbe waxes extreme in his praise for the young shluchim who forwent the comforts of America to spread Judaism in cold, foreign Europe and were, boruch Hashem, successful and have earned great admiration thanks to their dedication to the Jewish people, despite the many hardships. The Rebbe ends the letter with words that stress the common element in the avoda of every Jew, each with his talent, to illuminate the world.

(Interestingly, after his death, Lipchitz’s villa was donated to Chabad and it is used today by Camp Gan Yisrael.)

## THE ONLY LADY AT THE MENORAH LIGHTING

Throughout the years, the couple were privileged to displays of closeness and great endearment on the part of the Rebbe who always inquired about their material and spiritual state, looking out for them as a loving



#### THE REBBE BEING MESADER KIDDUSHIN AT THE WEDDING OF THE GARELIKS

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father, and showering manifold blessings on them, material and spiritual.

In a fascinating conversation with Rebbetzin Bassie Garelik, I mainly heard about the Rebbe's fatherly relationship throughout the years. These stories demonstrate the Rebbe's genuine interest down to the small details. What stands out is the Rebbe's considerable trust in the shlichim and his great nachas from them. From every story one can glean pearls of insights and advice for every area of life.



The first time I went to the Rebbe was after a year and a half on shlichus. When my sister got married and the family wanted me to attend the wedding, I wrote to the Rebbe and pointed out that if I attended the wedding, Gan Yisrael would be closed that summer because there wasn't anyone else to run it. The Rebbe instructed me to stay in Milan and showered endless brachos on me.

After seven years in which I did not travel to the Rebbe, I asked the Rebbe permission to visit. I had six children, the youngest being six months old and the oldest eight. The plan was to travel with the children and for my husband to stay behind and continue the work of shlichus.

The Rebbe immediately responded in a telegram saying if the doctors approved flying with young children, then I could come. We got the medical okay and flew to the Rebbe from 18 Kislev until after 13 Shevat. We stayed with our cousins, the Morosov family on Eastern Parkway, near 770. Every day, I would take the children to 770 for davening. In those days, the tefillos were in the small zal upstairs and women did not attend, but since the purpose of my traveling with the children was solely the Rebbe, I used every opportunity possible to see the Rebbe. I would stand in the hallway in order to see the Rebbe as he went in and out for tefillos.

The first night of Chanuka, I stood with the children near the door of the small zal, knowing that after mincha there would be the menorah-lighting. The Rebbe, who was standing in the Beis Medrash with the door closed, just a few feet away from us, noticed us and opened the door wide so we could see and hear and be a part of the lighting. My son Levi, who was seven, went inside to daven and I stood with my daughter Rivky in the hall. The other children were with my parents in Pittsburgh. Behind me stood two of my nieces who came with me. We were the only females at that *hadlaka*.

At the end of the davening, the Rebbe went to his office and before going in he stopped, looked at Levi, who had also come out of the zal and was standing next to me. Then the Rebbe shifted his gaze to me and then back to Levi. Then he took out six dollar coins from his pocket and gave Chanuka gelt for all the children and entered his office.

I was so overcome by this that my heart was flooded by powerful emotions that burst forth. I turned around and buried my head in the arms of my niece and burst into tears of overwhelming emotion and joy.

## THE FIRST YECHIDUS

When I had calmed down somewhat, Rabbi Groner came over to me and said that Rabbi Chodakov was waiting for me in his office. We entered the tiny office that was at the end of the hall and R' Chodakov told me that when the private audiences for 19 Kislev had ended, the Rebbe had asked why we had not had yechidus. Perhaps the Rebbe thought I had asked for an appointment and wasn't given one.

I told R' Chodakov that I had not asked for yechidus since I saw that many guests had come and since I was staying until after 10 Shevat, I would have yechidus before my return trip. And that is what happened.

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VIEW OF MILAN ITALY FROM THE AIR



I had yechidus alone. In the yechidus, the Rebbe asked me about Levi's pei'os (they were long then, which is not customary in Chabad). I said that 80% of our community were Holocaust survivors who came after the war to Italy, thinking they were leaving the shtetl behind and were starting new lives. I wanted to convey a message to them of Jewish pride and thought that when they would see a sweet Jewish child proudly going about with long pei'os in modern-day Europe it would affect them more than a thousand lectures.

The Rebbe asked whether the child did not ask why he had long pei'os and his father did not. I remained silent.

We slowly shortened his pei'os and when he went to learn in a Chabad yeshiva, he had pei'os like every other Lubavitcher.

The Rebbe asked me what about parnassa and I said that boruch Hashem we had what we needed. The Rebbe asked again, "Do you have what you need because you truly have or is it because you are happy with your lot?" I said we did not lack for anything.

At that time, my husband had started working a bit with kashrus companies and the Rebbe asked about money from hechsherim. I said that we used that money for the tickets and the Rebbe said he did not understand the connection between hechsherim and tickets. Then the Rebbe asked about money from the work in the Beis Din and I said again that we used the money for something connected to our shlichus work and not for personal things. Again, the Rebbe said he did not understand the connection between working at the Beis Din and this ...

Then the Rebbe asked, "Why don't you want expansive parnassa?" I was quiet. In my heart I felt, and later wrote this to the Rebbe, that we went on shlichus because we wanted to be connected to the Rebbe and to merit to raise Chassidische children who would also be connected to the Rebbe. This was our hearts'

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AND JOY.**

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desire. We did not go on shlichus for expansive parnassa. I knew I could not have everything and if I had to choose between Chassidische children who were mekusharim to the Rebbe and expansive parnassa, I preferred children connected to the Rebbe.

But the Rebbe constantly inquired and worried about us, about our material circumstances. Whenever our balabatim and mekuravim would go to the Rebbe, he would ask them about us and ask them to make sure that all was well with us and that we had all our material needs.

### **"HOW COULD I NOT GRANT HER PERMISSION?"**

At the beginning of our shlichus, when I was expecting my oldest daughter, my husband asked the Rebbe permission to go to 770. The Rebbe said it had to be with the full agreement of his wife and only if there was a secure return visa.

I said to my husband, "Ah ... you cannot go to the Rebbe without my permission."

He smiled and said, "You sent the telegram which implies that you consent!"



### THE PICTURE THAT WAS PRESERVED

When my son was born, my husband wanted to name him Yosef Yitzchok. I wanted to call him Levi Yitzchok for the Rebbe's father, and that is what we did in the end.

When Levi was a bit older than a year we took a picture of him and sent it to Rebbetzin Chana, stating that his name is Levi Yitzchok.

A few years later, we hosted a Chassid from New York who was close to the Rebbe's family and he also named his son Levi Yitzchok. At the meal, when he had a bit to drink he told us that when he went to visit Rebbetzin Chana and brought a picture of his son Levi Yitzchok, and showed it to the Rebbetzin, she went to her room and came back with the picture of our son. She told him with obvious pleasure that this child is also named for her husband!

If that Chassid had not told this anecdote, we would not have known how much nachas the Rebbetzin had from this.

I said, "Okay, but you don't have a visa," and he pointed out that it said a "secure" [using the Hebrew word **betucha**, related to the word bitachon meaning trust] return visa.

He ended up going and I took care of the return visa.

A month later, my brother R' Zushe Posner got married in Eretz Yisrael and my parents had yechidus before the wedding and asked, on my behalf, for permission for me to attend the wedding. The Rebbe said, "How can I not allow her to travel when I just now allowed her husband to come here?"

The Rebbe noted that it was a shemitta year in Eretz Yisrael and he hoped I would manage with all the restrictions of a shemitta year. I felt that the Rebbe was taking care of me as a father for a daughter, as though I was the only pregnant woman in Eretz Yisrael that year.

When Rivky was a year and a half she fell, nothing serious but as a young mother I was stressed and immediately sent a telegram to the Rebbe with a request for a bracha. The Rebbe responded immediately, "May you raise all your children in good health ..." I put the letter at the head of her bed although there were those who laughed when they saw this.

### "THE ONE WHO CHOSE YOU, CHOSE WISELY"

Once, in yechidus, the Rebbe said to my husband, "I heard that near Milan there is a town of Chassidim who do not learn Chassidus." The Rebbe was referring to Lugano. The people there had never asked my husband to learn Chassidus with them but I learned sichos of the Rebbe with the women there and they occasionally invited me to speak at Chanuka, Purim, etc. gatherings. I got along well with them and felt particularly good after what the Rebbe said to my husband.

One time, I was invited on an ordinary weekday to give a shiur to girls in the afternoon and to women in the evening. I prepared



THE REBBE BEING MESADER KIDDUSHIN AT THE WEDDING OF THE GARELIKS

two sichos of the Rebbe which I alternated in the event that there would be the same participants.

When I finished the shiur in the evening, there was silence and then one of the women asked me to continue. “We want to hear more,” she said. But then I suddenly blanked out, my mind was empty. I could not think of anything to speak about and we began to sing and somehow that is the way it ended.

On the way home, on the train to Milan, a trip that took an hour and a half, I thought about what happened and felt terrible. I cried all the way home. Here there were finally people who wanted to learn and I had nothing to

say. This bothered me so much and after a few days of feeling down, I wrote to the Rebbe. I described what happened and I added that when I was in Bais Yaakov, there were some very smart girls and maybe if the Rebbe had sent one of them instead of me, who knows what she could accomplish here.

The Rebbe responded in a long beautiful letter in English, a letter that was printed and publicized in which he explained that there are two types of planting. You can plant wheat and a lot grows quickly but how precious is it? You can plant an orchard of trees, it takes years until the fruit grows but once it grows the fruit is much more precious and worth a lot more. The better the fruit, the more time it takes to

produce. So too with man's actions. Some fall into one category or the other. You do things and quickly see the fruits of your labor but it's not worth that much. And sometimes it takes years until you see the results of what you're doing. But when you'll finally see it, you'll realize how precious it is!

The Rebbe added, "Surely, what you're doing now falls into the second category." The Rebbe ended off the letter with, "It seems from your letter that you have doubts as to whether the one who sent you made a good choice. Surely, you don't have those doubts, even though I won't take it personally if you do. But being as I'm sure that you don't have those doubts and that the one who chose you chose wisely, continue on with your work and G-d willing, you will be successful."

In connection with this I'll mention that when we out on shlichus, R' Chodakov said to us, "Start with a school and with Hashem's help the students of today will be your partners of tomorrow!"

I was twenty years old and I thought: Oy, how long will I have to wait until I have partners? Today, boruch Hashem, bli ayin hara, I am seeing children of my students who have also become partners.

### **MOSHIACH, WE ARE READY!**

My husband once asked me to go to the Rebbe to ask what we should do about a certain matter that preoccupied us in our shlichus. I traveled to the Rebbe and had yechidus and presented the situation. The Rebbe said whatever he said and then, toward the end of the yechidus, he began to shower me with brachos. He concluded with a jolting line, "*Biz Moshiach vet kumen oder free'er, in Melbourne oder Milano*" (Until Moshiach will come or earlier, in Melbourne or Milan).

I left very confused by that last line. What did the Rebbe mean? That he connected us with Melbourne, I understood, because we went on

**// MY HUSBAND ONCE ASKED ME TO GO TO THE REBBE TO ASK WHAT WE SHOULD DO ABOUT A CERTAIN MATTER THAT PREOCCUPIED US IN OUR SHLICHUS. I TRAVELED TO THE REBBE AND HAD YECHIDUS AND PRESENTED THE SITUATION. THE REBBE SAID WHATEVER HE SAID AND THEN, TOWARD THE END OF THE YECHIDUS, HE BEGAN TO SHOWER ME WITH BRACHOS.**

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shlichus at the same time. We arrived in Milan before 19 Kislev 5719 and they [R' Yitzchok Groner and family] went after 19 Kislev, but why did the Rebbe say Melbourne before Milan? I'll admit, that the Rebbe mentioning Melbourne before Milan bothered me a bit.

I immediately called my husband and told him about the yechidus and the last line. I said we needed to do something grand to turn around this comparison. My husband had the idea of building a replica of 770 in Milan. If the Rebbe said Moshiach would be coming via Milan, then we needed to prepare a suitable place and he made sure there was a nice library, a mikva, etc.

For the most part, I did not get involved in the building but I asked that there be an elevator so it would be comfortable for the Rebbe because the library was upstairs and the mikva downstairs. We are waiting here for him to come! ■

In addition, I went out around five times a week for outreach. I went between three and five times out of the Kfar, to all kinds of schools and women's organizations like WIZO, ORT, and I thought that maybe my going out in the evenings would be instead of teaching in the seminary. I submitted a note in the morning and asked that since I went out three to five times a week and now it was hard for me to get out to teach because my husband became rav, and I found the chinuch of the children hard to do along with taking care of the house plus outreach, could I leave my teaching job? I did not receive an answer.

When I had yechidus that night, I was very upset. First, because I was not deserving of an answer from the Rebbe. Everyone got answers and I didn't! Second, what should I do. I was returning home and did not know what to do.

When I walked in, the Rebbe looked at the doorway and saw me enter and he opened a drawer and took out the note that I had submitted in the morning. Apparently, the Rebbe wanted to respond to the note in yechidus which was not the norm. It was like a movie scene; each person entered for a minute for a bracha and then left and I was there for a long time in yechidus.

The Rebbe said to me, "You ask about the seminary - the way of an akeres ha'bayis, in that she is *'ateres tiferes beis Yisrael'* (the crown of the glory of the House of Israel), is first the chinuch of the children and taking care of the house. If you have the time, then the school takes precedence since it is 'moistening in order to moisten others,' i.e. the seminary educates girls who will be mothers and teachers." The Rebbe gave a lot of credit to the school and did not allow me to leave.

But you shouldn't think that the Rebbe granted me any concessions as far as my giving shiurim. At the end of the yechidus, the

Rebbe blessed me with success in spreading the wellsprings. He did not concede on the evening activities!

At first, I went back to teaching only evening courses and then we made a change in that when my girls were in high school they came home at two. The ride from seminary would bring them to the house and pick me up and I began working in the afternoon. The girls stayed with the little ones and I would teach until six. So it was never at the expense of the children.

### WITH JOY AND GLADNESS OF HEART

After the Rebbe answered my question he looked at me and he sensed the enormous tension I felt and asked, "Why are you so nervous?"

His holy gaze rested upon me and I was literally frozen from emotional overwhelm but the Rebbe's shining face had its effect and the tension began to dissipate and I relaxed. Then the Rebbe began to prove to me that I had no reason to be tense. He brought me proofs from the past, present and future. From the past, that I was always successful in my public work; from the present, that I had just celebrated my sister-in-law's wedding with a very illustrious family; from the future, that we were just before the month of Adar that had so many miracles for the Jewish people so the joy should be apparent on the face.

Till today, when I find things hard, I see the Rebbe's holy face looking at me and giving me the strength to overcome. May we merit to continue to carry on the work the way the Rebbe MH"M guided us. May we be redeemed speedily, in this month of Nissan and gather together in one big yechidus with the Yechida Klalis, our King, Moshiach. ■

# Everyday Heroines

SARA GOPIN

## FREEDOM MEANS, "WE CAN!"

**AS** we reexperience Yetziat Mitzrayim, one question still remains. When Pharaoh's army of 600,000 spearmen charged at Bnei Yisrael by the Yam Suf, why didn't they fight back to save themselves and to rescue their children? The Ibn Ezra explains that they were incapable of changing their mindset as slaves, and therefore all of the men later perished in the desert. "The Egyptians were the masters over the Israelites, and the generation that left Egypt learned from an early age to suffer the yoke of the Egyptians, and therefore had a lowly spirit. The generation **after** the generation of the desert did not see galus and had a high spirit" (Beshalach 14:13).

After 210 years of servitude in Egypt, the slave mentality was not easily eradicated. A slave has no hope for a brighter future. Ten of the twelve spies reported that it is not possible to conquer the "giants" in Eretz Yisrael. It was only Yehoshua bin Nun and Kalev ben Yefuna who exclaimed, "We Can!" (Shelach 14:30) thereby meriting to lead Bnei Yisrael into their glorious new chapter in Eretz Yisrael.

Imprisonment inhibits dreams. Statistics show that a fairly large percentage of ex-cons return to a life of crime shortly after their release, seeking the security of their familiar routine. Stripped of their identity, individual goals become irrelevant. Even animals that are captured and removed from their natural habitat lose their drive for living and procreation.

Galus is "imprisonment." There is pressure

to conform to societal values that are often diametrically opposed to *pnimiyus*. Our eyes only see what is transpiring on the surface, and we have no clue of what is happening behind the scenes. In all of this confusion, we must rise above all of the constraints and become a beacon of light.

### TRANSCENDENCE

Life is more than the passage of time, it is the **transcendence** of experience by surpassing its limitations. When feeling trapped, it is good to imagine yourself walking right through the closed doors. You may even discover that the barriers were only an optical illusion.

Despite the servitude mentality, when the Torah describes the building of the Mishkan, Bnei Yisrael were eager to participate, even though it was not a requirement. After being bricklayers for generations, they suddenly became skilled craftsmen, such as weavers, woodcarvers and goldsmiths. When there is a burning desire to serve Hashem, every challenge can be overcome with flying colors. Even more astounding is that once Bnei Yisrael took responsibility and became proactive, there were more complaints. They were healing from the trauma of over two centuries of slavery.

### THE CHAINS WITHIN US

Baruch Hashem, we have our freedom, but nevertheless there can be "chains" that come from within us. Labels, insults and sarcastic

remarks build up and have an oppressive effect, blocking the natural flow of our inherent capabilities. But there's always another chance. Broken souls worldwide are receiving chizuk from the Rebbe MH" M, and the empowering words restore vitality to our "wings."

Several years ago, as I was struggling with a dilemma, I read the following sentence which changed the course of my life: "Sometimes our comfort zones become our prisons." It started with tiny baby steps, but I left my cocoon. The more that I overcame the challenges of unfamiliar environments, the less threatening they became. The truth is, after falling so many times, nothing is intimidating anymore. Risk-taking is not easy, but it's definitely a better option than confinement in a comfort zone. My self-talk kept repeating two words: "You Can!"

As I share these words Eretz Yisrael is "normalizing" after its third lockdown. As the doors for nonessential items closed, the zoom app for more and more shiurim opened, especially in Sefer HaTanya. Rather than letting restrictions dampen our spirits, the teachings of the Alter Rebbe are elevating souls worldwide. Our bodies may still be in quarantine, but our neshamas are soaring to new heights.

A friend of mine, Yael, expressed how the shiurim helped her, "I used to have a very black and white perspective, and if I wasn't perfect, that meant that I'm a failure. The Tanya taught me to accept my basic nature as imperfect, therefore it is easier for me to take chances, and to try to overcome one struggle at a time. I freed myself of the guilt that was binding me, preventing me from trying out new experiences."

On a global level as well, there is a quest for a better, more spiritually uplifting lifestyle. Our fragmented society is disillusioned with man-invented ideologies and systems. The coronavirus has awoken an awareness that only a united effort of living in accordance with Divine law will bring long-lasting peace and freedom for all of mankind.

## SWEET CHICKEN WITH SWEET POTATOES

Ingredients:

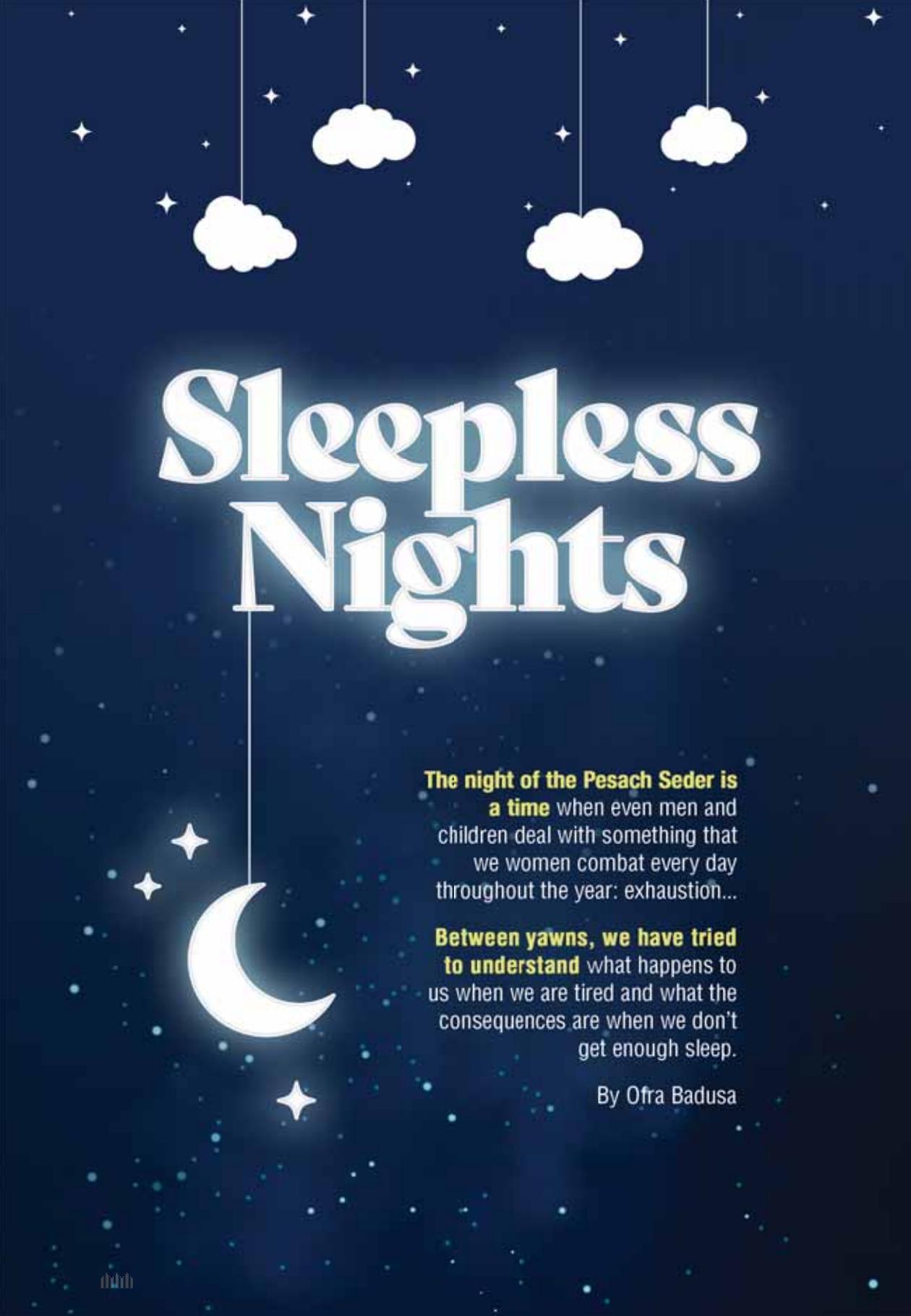
- 1 chicken, quartered
- 1 small onion
- 2-3 sweet potatoes
- 2 carrots
- 1 heaping tablespoon of honey
- juice of 1 large orange
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt

Slightly oil a large skillet, and put in a chopped onion, and on top place the chicken pieces. In a cup of water mix the honey, orange juice and the salt, and pour it over the chicken. On top place the largely sliced sweet potatoes and carrots, and let them steam. Cook covered on a very low flame for about an hour and a half, until the "sauce" thickens.

## SHINE YOUR LIGHT

We live a dichotomized life, as a servant and a prince. The paradox is that bittul and humility are what enables us to be less intimidated to shine our unique light. It's not about us, everything that we have is a gift from Hashem. Now, in the Seventh Generation, we are especially privileged to wear our crown. After an endless galus, Hashem is giving us a taste of the delicacies that await us in the royal palace.

On Pesach we celebrate our freedom, and our transformation from a nation of slaves to a kingdom of priests. The high spirits last throughout the entire year, believing in ourselves and in everyone around us. Yet true freedom can only be achieved in Yemos HaMoshiach. The stage is set, and we have been given the leading role, calling out for all to hear, **"We Can! Yechi HaMelech!"** ■



# Sleepless Nights

**The night of the Pesach Seder is a time** when even men and children deal with something that we women combat every day throughout the year: exhaustion...

**Between yawns, we have tried to understand** what happens to us when we are tired and what the consequences are when we don't get enough sleep.

By Ofra Badusa

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

for our physical and emotional health is tremendous. According to all the research studies, sleep is critical for us and is the basis of our good health. On average, a person needs seven to nine hours of sleep, and ideally, the best time to sleep is at nightfall. When the sun sets, the melatonin hormone, also known as “the sleep hormone”, begins to secrete from our body. In truth, people used to “close out the day” much earlier. It was quite natural to lower the activity level and rest, however, that was before Thomas Edison and his lightbulb.

Today, the situation is totally different. When nightfall comes and the children go to bed, we often get our second wind. Finally, we have a little quiet time, during which we can get some things done: domestic chores, important phone calls, unfinished work, etc. Perhaps, if we would understand the significance and importance of sleep, we would put the long “to-do” list aside and find the proper time to give our body and soul the rest they desperately need.

Apart from the amount of time we spend sleeping, there is also importance attached to the quality of our sleep, how deeply we sleep, how often we wake up during the night, and more. **So, what is so important about our sleep?** The whole process of cleaning the poisons from our body, strengthening our metabolism, rejuvenating our brain cells, and other therapeutic activities take place best at night, during sleep. This is the ideal time for the body not to waste any energy, and therefore, it can free itself up for these purifying and renewing procedures.

What most people don't know is that it's most important to go to bed when the body is ready, especially the digestive system, which “steals” a great deal of energy from our bodies when it digests and absorbs the food we consume.

**What are the main reasons for lack of sleep?**

- **Stress:** This is one of the main reasons for sleep problems. During times of stress, the cortisol hormone (adrenaline) is secreted. This hormone is designed to save us from perilous situations, giving us the special strength we need to extricate ourselves from real danger. The problem is that today, this hormone is secreted far too often and without an actual need. Modern-day life causes a person to be in his fair share of stressful situations: work responsibilities, emotional crises, difficulties with the children, domestic strife, etc.

- **Lack of important vitamins in the body:** Even this can cause sleep disorders. We're talking about a deficiency of Vitamin B, Vitamin C, folic acid, choline, vital amino acids, calcium, magnesium, zinc, and Omega-6.

- **Sensitivity to radiation:** This is a new form of illness, diagnosed due to the increased usage of cellular devices around us.

- **Candida fungus.**

- **Hypothyroidism.**

## THE ROAD TO IMPROVED PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Among the results of lack of sleep are weight gain, a weakened immune system, exposure to infection and impurities, allergies, vitamin and mineral deficiency, digestive problems, headaches, increased appetite due to an over-active ghrelin (hunger) hormone, a slower metabolism.

**How can we improve our problems with insomnia?**

**Changing to a better form of nourishment:**

This helps against the symptoms I listed at the beginning at this article. It's important to eat foods rich in zinc, calcium, magnesium, and choline: unroasted almonds, pistachios, whole rye, pumpkin seeds, quinoa, cooked chick peas, tofu, lentils, green peas, miso, pecans, millet, green leafy vegetables, kohlrabi, celery, sweet potato, dried apricots, broccoli, pumpkin,

bean sprouts, etc. **Avoid foods with a high glycemic index**, which tend to increase the blood sugar level at supertime and put us into total metabolic imbalance.

Take regular **blood tests** to check for vitamin deficiencies or candida growth.

**Stay away from unnecessary stress.**

Here are a few tips:

- Practice some exercises to help maintain a feeling of calm.
- Partake in some moderate physical activity before going to sleep.
- Probiotics can help relieve sleep disorders.
- Develop a set bedtime routine, based naturally on the bedtime Krias Shema, i.e., playing some soft niggunim in the background.
- Be strict about eating **an early dinner**, comprised of foods easy to digest. And if you want something later, eat fruit only.
- As much as possible, limit exposure to all kinds of radiation.
- And **the best tip** that I can give you regarding sleep is: Go to bed early! This is a real pleasure. And if some of you can't bear to see a sink full of dirty dishes, you'll get over it. When you wake up at half past four, five o'clock in the morning, you can organize everything and with renewed strength!

***B'hatzlacha, and...may we awaken already from the dream of the exile and experience the reality of the Redemption! ■***

## THE REBBE ON THE SPIRITUAL AVODA OF SLEEPING

*Just as sleep, inactive as it may seem, is crucial for our health, spiritual sleep is also important. Now, you are probably surprised to hear that, because being spiritually asleep doesn't sound to good to a Chasidische ear, but first read this piece of the Rebbe's sicha from Parshas Vayetze 5752 (translation by Sichos in English)*

During the 14 years in which Yaakov studied in the House of Study of *Shem* and *Ever*, he did not sleep. Similarly, during the 20 years he stayed in Lavan's house, he did not sleep. Why was it that of all places, it was at the place of the Beis HaMikdash that Yaakov lay down to sleep?

This forces us to conclude that there is a positive dimension in lying down. As mentioned above, standing or sitting upright indicates that a person's conscious powers control his existence. In contrast, when a person lies down, there is no difference between the more elevated dimensions of his existence and the lower ones.

In spiritual terms, although normally this would imply a descent, a lowering of the level of one's higher, spiritual powers, it can also be interpreted in a positive manner. It can be appreciated as a reference to the revelation of Hashem's essence, a level which is above all particular qualities and simultaneously, reflected in all of them. In relation to this level, the head and the feet are on the same plane.

This level of connection can continue even after a person arises from sleep and stands on his feet. Although his conscious powers will assume control, he will still recognize the fundamental equality that stems from a connection to Hashem's essence. Thus, through the descent a Jew experiences in this world, he can: a) reveal how the material cannot obscure the spiritual and quite the contrary, it is a vehicle for the expression of the spiritual; b) reach a level above all limitations through which he can establish an equation and unity between the material and the spiritual.

# The Liberation of the community must begin with concentration on the self

from the Rebbe's Michtov Kloli, 11th Nissan 5724

The liberation from Egypt, which is the essence of Passover, is linked with the Pesach sacrifice. The liberation from Egypt was not merely the liberation of numerous individuals; it was the liberation of a People.

Accordingly, one would have expected that the Pesach sacrifice would emphasize the “nation” motif, the idea of community. Actually the approach and instruction was exactly the reverse.

True, all the “congregation” was enjoined to offer the Pesach sacrifice, but the instructions were explicit: each home had to have its own Pesach sacrifice; each Jew was individually singled out and counted for the purpose of sharing in it; each one had to be confined to his particular home or company for the duration of the Pesach sacrifice repast.

Here the Torah teaches us that the way to accomplishment, even if it is intended for the community

as a whole, and even if it concerns the very “liberation” of the community, must nevertheless begin with concentration on the self, and on the members of one’s family and immediate circle, even though the call must necessarily go out to the whole community.

Moreover, attention should be directed not towards general considerations and all-embracing resolutions, but towards applying the main concern and energy in the realization, in the daily life, of the various “small” duties. For it is precisely this approach that will eventually bring the deliverance of the individual as well as of the community as a whole.



May G-d grant that every Jew take a lesson from the above-said, and unsaid, messages of Passover; and just as at the time of the Exodus, the liberation of the People came as a result of the liberation of the individual, so be it also here and now. ■



**Yehudis  
Homnick**

## ADMIT THE SPLIT; THEN COMMIT

**ONE** of the two biblical mitzvos of Pesach is *v'higadeta l'vincha*, recounting the story of the Exodus to the next generation. Things are done seder night specifically to get the children involved. Although the sicha which this article references was said in Tishrei, the lesson about chinuch applies at all times and is especially pertinent on the Yom Tov of Pesach when our focus is on chinuch.

### "DEDICATED & LOVING, BUT ONLY HUMAN."

- *Reb. Feige Twerski says she remembers a rosh yeshiva at a Torah Umesorah convention, observing that the quality of children raised in our generation falls far short compared to those of prior generations. He attributed this, for the most part, to the fact that children these days aren't being raised much of the time by their mothers, but by babysitters. Our families are sustained by "leftovers" - energy left over from other pursuits. Husbands and children are not top priority.*

- *In a recent article in one of the frum magazines, a woman describes arriving at her babysitter's house. She could hear her baby screaming from five houses away. The babysitter, who looked like she was about to cry, handed her a dirty infant. The woman did not blame the babysitter. She generously asked, "How could she give him proper attention while holding an eight-week-old baby in one arm and a newborn in the other? How could she cope with another*

*four children crawling around, begging to be cared for? She's dedicated and loving, but she is only human."*

- *The baby was up most of the night. So was she. Is it colic? An earache? She is about to teach her class as she worries about child-care arrangements. Will the babysitter be calling to complain about her bringing a sick child who won't calm down? Will she have to take off from work in order to be with her baby?*

- *A shlucha wrote an article describing her exhausted state after having a baby, how she went for therapy and was given medication. She believed she had postpartum depression and anxiety which "happened" to her and can happen to anyone, and she urged readers to seek help. And yet, she described how after the birth of her seventh child she enjoyed the first few weeks with her new baby, but then felt she had to get back to life which included: "carpools, Hebrew school, Yom Tov guests, programs and more." Not surprisingly, she began to have panic attacks and was feeling worse and worse.*

There was a Reform rabbi by the name of Herbert Weiner who wrote about his encounters with the Rebbe. There is a particular dialogue that he had which has stayed with me<sup>1</sup>. He commented to the Rebbe that the Chassidim that he saw had a "a sort of open and naive look in their eyes that a sympathetic observer might call *t'mimus* (purity) but that



might less kindly be interpreted as emptiness or simple-mindedness, the absence of inner struggle.”

The Rebbe said that what was missing was a “kera.” A what? The Rebbe said this means a “split,” which comes from living in two worlds.

It seems to me that women today are attempting to live in two or more worlds. Each of the examples cited above are illustrations of women struggling with contradictions, tension, compartmentalizing, i.e. kera. It mostly comes down to the dichotomy between their home life and other activities. Women are not experiencing harmony in their daily activities. Rather, each thing a woman says “yes” to, means she is saying “no” to something else that is important to her. Wherever she is, she feels she should be somewhere else.<sup>2</sup>

### BEING A SINGLE-MINDED MOTHER

By way of contrast, I knew a young woman with four little children who kept them home.

No daycare, playgroup or preschool. She was her own children’s mother and teacher and program director. This was in Brooklyn and she did it because she wanted to. She was calm and single-minded, not pulled in different directions.

I imagine that the ones who were thrilled when schools and most workplaces closed due to corona were the babies and toddlers. They got to be home with mommy and weren’t whisked out of their homes early in the morning and handed over to a person hired to watch them along with many others.

### THE “CHANA MODEL” OF MOTHERING

What does the Rebbe say about mothers and childcare? The following is a sicha that is often quoted but that I don’t see implemented. Here are some excerpts<sup>3</sup>:

“As told in the Medrash Yalkut Shemoni, when Elkanah would go to Shiloh for the mitzva of *aliyah l’regel*, he would take along

his entire extended family, and every year they would take a different route. Why?

People would ask him, “Where are you all going? Where are you taking so many people?”

He would explain, “I am taking my entire household to be *oleh regel* to Shiloh.”

Imagine how much was accomplished by Elkanah and his household, including Chana!

After longing and praying for a child for many years, Chana gave birth to a son. When it came time for *aliyah l’regel*, Elkanah assumed that Chana would come along, as always. But Chana refused to go, explaining, “I have a child and I have to wait until he is weaned, until I have raised him ... until then I will remain at home with him.”

Chana was a prophetess. She not only saw G-dliness in Shiloh as all Jews did, but she saw as a prophetess sees.

Elkanah was a wealthy man. He could have hired servants and nurses so that Chana could have traveled easily with the child and the trip would not have harmed him.

But it is understandable that the care and attention that one can give a child in one’s own home does not compare to that which one can give on a journey, even with all the servants and comforts money can buy.

Alternatively, if she didn’t want to take him along, surely Chana could have hired a babysitter for the few weeks she would be gone. In Shiloh she would have filled herself with G-dliness and prophecy, and ultimately her child would have benefited from it as well ...

She showed strength and *mesiras nefesh* by not going up to Shiloh for the first two years of his life in order to ensure that Shmuel would receive the fullest chinuch possible, and on a journey, one cannot be absolutely sure that one can provide as well as at home ...

## YABSHE

1. prepare your regular potato kugel mixture (potatoes, onions, eggs, salt)
2. put oil in the bottom of a pan
3. pour half the kugel mixture in
4. place boneless flanken on it
5. pour the remaining potato mixture
6. Bake for two hours, uncovered, at 425

## SAUTEED FLOUNDER

1. defrost a bag of flounder and cut away any bony parts
2. slice and fry a large onion
3. add flounder pieces to the pan
4. sprinkle with salt
5. cook until done, about 15 minutes.

Going up to Shiloh does not compare with what a woman can accomplish by staying home and making sure the home is built on the foundations of Torah and mitzvos in general... and the chinuch of her children in particular.”



That’s all well and good, some might be thinking, but my income is what’s paying the bills. Or, I teach, and the Rebbe values that immensely. In fact, it has been said that after this *sicha*, the Rebbe’s office was inundated with questions by mothers who taught who asked whether they should resign their positions. The answer was no.

So what was accomplished with this *sicha* if life went on as before?

The following is my speculation. We know, from various stories about all sorts of things, that often the Rebbe opted not to impose his will. He wanted people to take the initiative and if they asked him what to do he might not answer at all as he waited for the individual to decide. I wonder whether the Rebbe's response to the teachers would have been different if the women who taught hadn't asked the Rebbe, "Do you mean I should resign my teaching job?" and instead, they told the Rebbe that they were leaving their job so they could emulate Chana and focus exclusively on their children. Or, what if they figured out a way to ensure that even while teaching or working, their young children were always taken care of by a parent.

### AT LEAST ONE PARENT WITH THE CHILDREN

Another article<sup>4</sup> comes to mind that made an impression on me, this one about a woman whose mother was an orphan and could not understand women who left their children to go out to work. Having absorbed this message from her mother, she resolved that her working would not interfere with her family.

She babysat for six years and was able to care for her own children at the same time. Howev-

er, she started to feel she was enabling something that went against her values by allowing mothers to leave their young children to be cared for by someone else all day.<sup>5</sup> She stopped babysitting and pursued other employment while sharing the care of her children with her husband. This wasn't an easy arrangement for either one of them; it was rather difficult, in fact, but they were committed to having one of them available to watch their children. As long as she had a baby or toddler at home, she never worked in the morning. She worked when her husband could be with the children or the children were asleep.

There were exceptions but overall, their policy was: when a child was home, a parent was home. The author did not think every couple could manage this, yet, she believes that most of the *siyata dishmaya* she and her husband had was because of their commitment to their values.

I have a friend who did the same thing; either she or her husband cared for their children when the children were young. It's a decision, a commitment. "The way a person wishes to go, he is led," and "Nothing stands in the way of *ratzon-will*." ■

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1. See [https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article\\_cdo/aid/524749/jewish/Alone-with-Little-Moses.htm](https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/524749/jewish/Alone-with-Little-Moses.htm) for Herbert Weiner's article

2. As far as I know, in the seventies, in the United States, frum women did not leave their babies in daycare centers, i.e. in group care in some outside location. It was more prevalent for women to have a babysitter in their home. When Jews left Russia in droves and lived near frum areas in Brooklyn, it was common to see Russian-Jewish babysitters, often Yiddish-speaking, taking care of the one baby in their charge. Perhaps, nowadays, onsite babysitting at schools or other places of work, is the alternative.

Grandmothers are sometimes available. Mishpacha's Family First magazine had a feature article on babysitting grandmothers. <https://mishpacha.com/constant-connection/>

3. With thanks to Rabbi Motty Lipskier and the N'shei Chabad Newsletter for the translation of the sicha. Vov Tishrei 5734 (September 1973); Sichos Kodesh 5734

4. Mishpacha, January 15, 2014

5. There are mothers who erroneously think their babies are bored and need playmates. R' Zushe of Anipol said one of the things we learn from babies is that they are always busy. A Mishpacha magazine columnist noted that mothers these days are playing a bizarre game of "Hot Potato" in which each mother passes her baby on to the next person. Each one pays a babysitter to care for her child as she goes to teach other people's children.

# Pesach Cleaning Is Not Over!

Now, when you've put away the bleach and mop, is the best time to go back and clean out the compartments of your heart, revealing some small gifts and great opportunities that are concealed there as well as some leftover chametz > We even prepared for you a special chart to help you through the task...

HADAR MIZRACHI ◦

**YOU** are probably reading this article in between great cleaning sprees. Finally, Pesach is here, and you're done with that cleaning... But on Pesach we begin the deep clean — the avoda of *Sefiras HaOmer* in which we scrub our souls clean in preparation of *Matan Torah*.

We have departed from Egypt – and it wasn't easy.

We cleaned, we scrubbed, we scoured, and we “krechtzed” – groaning under the burden of the pre-holiday preparations. Yet, despite the exhaustion – it happened!

Alm-ghty Hashem, the King of all kings, revealed Himself to us at midnight! An intense illumination, spiritual abundance without measure and limitation that one could literally sense in the taste of the matza – the bread of faith and humility. “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat!” Family, friends, and acquaintances... Everyone in



their holiday garb, infused with a new light of freedom fervently desiring to dwell in this world, here and now...

Eliyahu HaNavi also came, bringing with him the announcement of the Redemption.

It really happened! We were there!

However, this is not the end of the story, and the work has not yet been completed.

Disappointment?

He hasn't come yet?

Back to the old routine? Getting on the scale reveals that you have what to do in the avoda of *middos*... Piles and piles of laundry again leave you totally exhausted...

Even your bank balance indicates that there's a need to strengthen the attribute of *bitachon* (trust in Hashem) ... Shall we appoint a leader and return to Egypt?

We are on the way to the greatest of all events!

The train is ready to leave the station. All aboard!

In the month of Iyar, there's a spiritual ascent from the first level of the Exodus from Egypt (the first Pesach in the first month – Nissan) to the second level (in the second month).

The Rebbe *Melech HaMoshiach* explains:

“In the spiritual avoda of the human soul, the Exodus from Egypt (the first Pesach) is the avoda of *'iskafia'* – subjugating the evil within man. From this avoda, there comes the higher second level – the avoda of *'is'hafcha'* – transforming the evil into good with all your heart – with both your inclinations (Pesach Sheni).

“This level of Pesach Sheni befits the overall innovation of the avoda of the month of Iyar – the second month (in relation to the month of Nissan, the first month). *Sefiras HaOmer* (observed primarily throughout the entire month of Iyar): the avoda of *Sefiras HaOmer* is a process of purifying the middos and transforming

them to holiness.” (Shaarei HaMoadim, pgs. 218-220)

The chometz, alluding to the evil within the soul from which we fled, can be transformed into good during the month of Iyar. Therefore, on Pesach Sheni, there's no need to remove the chometz – “Chometz and matza with him in the house” (Pesachim).

We learn from this that during these times, we have new strengths to fulfill a marvelous avoda and attain true freedom – releasing ourselves from the grasp of that “evil within the soul” and transforming it into good!

**Conclusion 1:** Leaving Egypt is only the beginning of the work.

**Conclusion 2:** Freedom demands work.

**Conclusion 3:** Get to work!

This specifically is the time to go back and clean out the compartments of your heart, revealing what small gifts and great opportunities are concealed there. Therefore, pay close attention and don't waste the chance for action!

Operation Chometz U'Matza (in alphabetical order) is underway!

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Provide yourself with time for contemplation.
2. Make use of the table below. Choose three negative emotions lodged with a high level of frequency in the left side of your heart.
3. Create a new and useful positive attribute from its negative counterpart. Make use of the supporting statement provide (or come up with your own) in order to assimilate this change in thinking according to the examples brought in the accompanying table. You can write it on a piece of paper and hang it or save it in an appropriate place as a means of applying the desired change in a proper manner.

B'hatzlacha!

EXISTING NEGATIVE EMOTION	MINDSET OR CATCHPHRASE	NEW POSITIVE EMOTION	SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Anger	"You're no good!" Blaming others. Aggressive response to insult.	Mercy	"Hashem is testing my faith. Anyone who causes me harm does so from his narrow-minded pettiness. Therefore, I have pity on him, thereby releasing me from anger."
Animosity	"I hate...because..."	Forgiveness	"I forgive all those who have transgressed against me, freeing myself from enmity and moving forward. Everything comes from Hashem!"
Boredom	Lack of interest.	Consideration	"I reveal new things, learning and developing from every detail and everything I do."
Clowning	Lack of seriousness, insignificant talk.	Seriousness	"Every moment is precious, and there is no substitute for a single word uttered."
Confusion	"I don't know what I want."	Choice	"I stand behind my choices."
Contempt	"It's not worth it."	Honor	"I relate to every detail and person around me with respect."
Cynicism	Mockery, lack of confidence. "No one really means it," "It's all a show."	Appreciation	"I appreciate and respect what is precious to me and to others."
Desire	An uncontrollable passion to fulfill gratification.	Modesty	"I have no need for gratification or external approval to feel a sense of self-worth. I happily enjoy simple things."
Despair	"I don't believe that I'll ever be able to change!"	Hope	"I believe that Hashem gives me the power to change my life and of the people around me for the better."
Disappointment	"I have failed!"	Thanks	"Everything comes from Hashem and everything is for the good."

EXISTING NEGATIVE EMOTION	MINDSET OR CATCHPHRASE	NEW POSITIVE EMOTION	SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Distance	Refraining from close contact. "I protect and guard myself from involvement and possible harm."	Openness	"I have no fear of harm. Hashem is the only One who can do anything. I am ready to accept and deal with imperfections within me and within others."
Embarrassment	No advice. "It's too personal to talk to anyone about."	Good Advice	Assume for yourself a mashpia; acquire for yourself a friend. "I'm not ashamed to seek advice when I feel the need."
Fear	"I'm afraid to deal with unfamiliar situations."	Courage	"I learn from experience and have no fear of failure. I merely try again to succeed."
Forsaking a Dream	"It's too good for me."	Diligence	"I don't forsake my dreams and I progress another step towards them every day."
Haughtiness	"I'm better than others."	Humility	"I reveal good qualities in everyone."
Jealousy	Sorrow when others succeed.	Favor	"Everyone has a portion designated for him by Hashem." "I can learn from the success of others."
Lack of Self-Worth	"I'm not worth it."	Self-Appraisal	"I appreciate myself as a unique creation of Hashem, believing in my abilities with the knowledge that I am not perfect."
Revenge	A desire to <b>punish anyone</b> who has harmed me.	Pardon	"I feel no need to offend those who have offended me. This is an atonement for sins. On the contrary, I will try to 'bestow kindness upon the guilty.'"
Sadness	A feeling of constraint, a lack of joy, withdrawing into myself. "I don't feel like it; everything's terrible."	Happiness	"I choose to see the good and contemplate on the events of my life with faith. I stringently 'get out of myself' and go make others happy."
Worry	"I'm concerned about the future."	Confidence	"Hashem watches over me. 'He who trusts in Hashem, kindness will encompass him.'"



**Rochel  
Brown**

## BACK TO POTATOES & TOMATOES

**SHALOM** to everyone! If you don't know me, it's Erev election time in Eretz Yisrael, and I belong to the Dust-Is-Not-Chometz party. Truly. Many years ago when my eight-year-old stood on a window sill that had already been cleaned for Pesach I seriously thought all the work had gone down the drain. I could have just taken a look to see if his shoes had left any traces, but at the time I was too far gone.

“Utzu eitz v'toofar”... (they have taken counsel and gone too far...)

Okay, actually my topic is something else, but it's all related.

You see we have gone so far... and we have come so far... Let me explain.

*Gone* so far: My grandparents A”H in Europe, Chassidim in Russia... what did they eat on weekdays? Some beblach soup? (Bean soup?) Perhaps before WWII there were some wealthier individuals who were able to eat a more varied and nutritious diet, but many many people made do with very minimum nutrition. Throughout the ages in fact many people made do in that manner, and today also there are people who cannot afford what is considered to be good nutrition.

There are so many factors to be considered in terms of what goes on to our dinner tables. Money, family background and habits, current available time and strength... For example, to

meet the deadline for this article, I put frozen pizza in the oven, which I don't do often. My husband just smelled it in time, B”H.

Let's consider Pesach. Chabad Pesach. In Europe or Russia people were used to eating potatoes. They sanded a layer off the wooden tables and presto chango, the house was almost ready for Pesach when they would eat – guess what? Potatoes – and if the gypsies or the soldiers hadn't stolen the geese, (like they did in my mother's town in Hungary,) they could have some schmaltz to make them tastier.

Today, we are used to other things, in quite a few cases, LOTS of other things. (Clean out your fridge and freezer and you may find red lentil seeds, flax seeds, chocolate chips encrusted with Challah crumbs and spices...)

### PESACH ALL YEAR

When Pesach comes we can get quite overwhelmed, because the change is going to be radical. What I'm suggesting, as part of the agenda for the Dust-Is-Not-Chometz party, is that we look at our Pesach menu, and take an *example* for our yearly menu.

Meat or fowl, vegetables, (during the year we can add tomatoes and green leafies,) eggs. Animal protein provides us with iron, zinc, and B12, nutrients which are hard to find easily from other sources, and are essential for growth, brain function, and the immune system. (Today it's sometimes possible to find

free-range fowl or meat without hormones and additives and with reliable kashrus.) Yes, if someone feels they should be vegetarian they can obtain these nutrients from other sources, but they have to take care to actually do that, because it does take planning and effort to get the nutrients from plant sources, and we need to include varied legumes and whole grains every day.

In Eretz Yisrael with a six-day work week, working mothers are very challenged in terms of time for food prep, and in America in areas where many already-observant Jews live, there are lots of delicious tempting alternatives to preparing food at home.

Everything has its time and place, but we can choose wisely. I believe in *asei tov* (do good) more than *sur mei'ra* (turn away from evil). If we focus on protein, a variety of vegetables, and fruit, *every day*, we will be doing ourselves a great favour, and lessening the attraction we have to junk food.

A pregnant woman, especially in the later months, needs as much protein as her husband, (generally men need more,) and a nursing mother needs a little more than her husband. She truly is feeding two. This way also, when we are used to eating cooked meals from the basic food groups, we may find the changeover to our Pesach menu less traumatic.

### SLEEP: "NOURISHING, A CURE, AND LIFE!"

How have we *come* so far? The world is ready for Moshiach, for positive reasons that we can see, like what the Rebbe speaks about in the famous sicha from Parshas Mishpatim 5752, as far as turning swords into plowshares, and the increasing talk in the world about human rights, healthy self-awareness, positive thinking and more. (Things are also happening involving not-yet-revealed good which we pray will only be a springboard for the ascent of Geula. On the positive side again there's also the awareness that mind-body are inextricably connected, that our thought patterns influence

### HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE:

In recent years I began to wash a pot full of peeled tomatoes and cook them in some water in order to have tomato sauce without peeling on Pesach.

On Pesach I like to saute onions and diced green squash, add chopped peeled tomatoes, and cook till the tomatoes have dissolved. Towards the end I add a little coarse salt. Very popular in my family, with mashed or plain cooked potatoes, and orange chicken. I make orange chicken by placing peeled slices of oranges over chicken pieces, and cooking in a very good heavy bottomed pot with some coarse salt strewn around it, on a very low fire. No water or oil necessary. The slices need to be thrown out, and watch out for the bitter pits.

*Ah gezunte zummer!*

our health, that music can improve our mood, memory, and intelligence.

Let's not forget activity. Let's turn on the music, dance with ourselves, our children, our friends, and take a little walk, even in the rain. When we take care of our health, we are helping ourselves achieve the Yetzias Mitzrayim that we have to work on every day.

I recently opened the Rebbe's letters on a tired day, and found a fascinating letter where the Rebbe quotes Pirkei d'Rabi Eliezer, describing sleep as "nourishing, a cure, and life!" I'm sure every parent and busy person will agree with that. Since we are not always able to get enough of that precious commodity, we have to try the above-mentioned methods of looking after ourselves, as the Rebbe MH"M says many times, "Having a healthy body is part of (going in) the ways of Hashem!" ■

# Us & Them

How To Help Your Kids Retain Their High  
Standards While Respecting Friends  
And Relatives Who Have Others

## PESACH IS A BEAUTIFUL TIME, BUT

it comes with a set of difficulties. I'm speaking of when families differ in their *hiddurim* standards which — if handled incorrectly — can cause friction (between families, and *within* families). Here are some thoughts on the matter — a matter which applies not only to Pesach...

### BEING PROUD OF MYSELF!

We'll start with a quiz:

When people ask you: "Are you a Lubavitcher?" What do you feel?

And when they ask you: "Do you really believe that the Rebbe is alive?" How do you react?

And what happens to your facial expression when they ask you with a very hurt look: "Don't you think that my food is kosher enough?"

Not only would children have a hard time answering these questions, but even (or perhaps *especially*) we the adults.

A brief inner analysis of my possible answers/reactions to various questions will help me determine where it would be appropriate to strengthen my sense of pride or which points Hashem wants me to smooth down until the diamond has been completely polished. Furthermore, we must remember that part of this internal polishing is achieved through learning to "know how to answer."

However, the fact that we are still working on our polishing where necessary doesn't mean that we are unable to help our children in exactly the same matter. We merely have to ask here the question of questions: How do we do it?

I still remember traveling one evening in

the outskirts of Bnei Brak together with my daughter. The cab driver turned out to be a big chatterbox, and his big dream was that his "wife" from Thailand should convert to Judaism. "However, you should have no misconception," he added, firmly shaking his tousled and curly hair — "I'm a Chabadnik, down to the core!" He then proceeded, having no way of knowing our religious affiliation, to tell his unsuspecting passengers about his great love for Chabad...

We, I must admit, found his quite noticeable sense of pride to be rather amusing.

### BE BIG AND THEN BE BIGGER

The story about the Rebbe Rashab and his older brother — Rabbi Zalman Aharon (known as the "Raza") — gives us an interesting perspective on how you're allowed to have a feeling of true pride. The Rebbe Rashab noticed the Raza placing their younger brother into a kind of pit he had dug, giving the excuse that "since he's younger than me, he has to be shorter than me!"...

When their father, the Rebbe Maharash, learned of what happened after hearing his younger sons sob, he told the older brother this fascinating lesson: "If you want to be higher, you must raise yourself, not bring others down."

The talk at home in all matters pertaining to our belonging to Chabad must be with a sense of joy and **pride**, however, not *ch"v* with **arrogance** at the expense of others. Sometimes, it mistakenly seems as if *ch"v* words that belittle others can raise the level of our own value. Not true. As I heard once (I currently can't recall from whom) that if the other person is small and you're bigger than him, you're average, but

if the other person is big and you're bigger than him, then you're truly big...

We always have to remember: The fact that I'm the best doesn't make the other person "bad." Each person has a purpose in life. Fortunate are we who have merited seeing the light and being in the "caravan" of the leader of the seventh generation, entrusted with the task of illuminating others in an aura of pleasantness and acceptance. The Rebbe MH" M established the expression "presently not Torah and mitzvah observant" to describe what other would call "secular" Jews, and would the portion of Torah observant Jews (or even fellow Lubavitchers for that matter) be any less if they don't share that viewpoint yet?

Am I saying that this is easy? Not at all. However, in my humble opinion, there is no "exemption" from this avoda, and we must strive to preserve our spiritual health and refrain from expressions of ridicule or rejection.

I would suggest that if this comes up as a discussion at home (perhaps you should even raise it...), you can use the following piece from HaYom Yom to "ground" the discussion:

**One Pesach, Reb Chaim Avraham (the Alter Rebbe's son) went to his brother (the Mittler Rebbe) to wish him *gut Yom Tov*. Reb Chaim Avraham related on that occasion that the Alter Rebbe had said, "On Pesach one does not offer a guest food and drink, but the guest may help himself." (20 Nissan)**

Have the kids discuss why we don't offer food to guest on Pesach, and point out how the Mittler Rebbe and his own brother, also a great Chassid and Tzaddik, may have not "shared" on Pesach...

## HOW TO INSTILL PRIDE?

One of the first stages in encouraging children to adopt greater *hiddurim* and stringencies is always to show respect for the uniqueness of each child in the family and to talk

about this. Each person has his own unique character, Hashem didn't "clone" us. There's only one version of each individual, and thus, he has to carry out his purpose in life to the fullest. When this matter becomes clear to our children and "flows through their veins", even those differences between one family and another, including among cousins in an extended family, will be accepted quite naturally.

## WHEN OTHERS ARE BETTER...

Then we have the opposite case: How do we react to someone with higher standards than us?

We too have to remember to think and react with appreciation and respect for the *hiddurim* of others, even if they don't apply to us personally or we currently haven't adopted them. Sometimes, there's a feeling that if someone applies certain stringencies that we don't, this is due to one of two reasons: either such stringencies are not relevant, the person is just "crazy" or OCD, and sometimes we take the route of "What can we do? We aren't as frum as he is"...

However, this simply isn't true, as we find in the Gemara that a sage was asked "In what was your father more strict?", i.e., each person's specific *hiddurim* pertain to the root of his soul, together with an honest desire for spiritual elevation.

We can always respond that currently we're not up to this, yet we're open to consult with a rav/mashpia and perhaps grow in the future. It's actually very educational to show our children that we're a work in progress and we're striving to be better (see below more on this).

## WHEN IT'S A SHTICK OR OBSESSION

Sometimes, even our own children come home from school with various *hiddurim* which might actually be shtick. Let's say that a child decides to kiss the mezuzah at every doorway he passes. Instead of starting to get upset and anxious as we think about obsessions, you can



Speak calmly (even incidentally) and reach an understanding on where this whole idea came from, and then decide calmly how to relate to it. Naturally, when a child shows clear signs of obsessiveness (which absolutely can take form in mitzva stringencies), it would be appropriate to help him through professional treatment. However, among ourselves, until the treatment begins to help, wouldn't it be preferable to have a child who does *Netilas Yadayim* three times, rather than a child who constantly snivels or keeps checking whether the door is locked? Baruch Hashem, the obsession is in matters of holiness!

### WHAT IF THE KIDS ASK FOR MORE?

It often happens in this seventh generation of ours that young boys and girls come with *hiddurim* in kashrus, *shmiras ha'lashon*, or some other extreme mode of conduct previous not observed at home, and the parents can feel somewhat uncomfortable. However, when we recognize that there's something commendable here, we see the Geula'dike signs of "And the hearts of the fathers will turn back through the sons." And then we can decide whether to consider adopting this new custom, or at least show respect for their desire to take on more *hiddurim*.

No need for all the anxiety of "What, we aren't good enough for him?", and this will only cause the child to have greater appreciation for his parents.

### SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER

A few more points to consider:

Let's remember that a child is allowed to be different. Forcing him to be my carbon copy doesn't come from "*hiddur*", but out of fear.

There are instances where a child encounters a non-Chabad lifestyle. While it "looks good" to him, even more *mehudar*, it can also clash with Chabad customs. In such a case, we should spell out clearly how we follow the path of the Rebbe and the manner in which this is done.

When we learn a *sicha* of the Rebbe MH"M, we should spend a little time on the actual instructions.

As Jewish women especially, it's very important to build within ourselves a desire for greater *hiddurim* and *naches* to the Aibishter. Our mission as Jews is to make for Hashem a home, and women have a special skill to make a "*dira na'ah* — a beautiful home" (see *sicha* of 22 Shevat 5752). ■



**Raizel  
Liberow**

## RELAXATION TIPS FOR TIRED MOMS

**"WHY** be Jewish, or any label for that matter?" David Lazerson, then a young college student, declared to the rabbi. "All the problems in the world, well, most of them anyhow, can be traced to some sort of organized religion."

Rabbi Gurary sat quietly in front of the students gathered for his Jewish Mysticism class in Buffalo and then responded: "Oh, you'll love Chabad. We're very disorganized!"

Slowly coming closer to Yiddishkeit, David became Dr. Dovid and in 1973, he and his wife Gittel were expecting their first child.

Coming to the Rebbe for a yechidus, Dr. Lazerson included a laundry list of blessings in their pan that they were requesting for their unborn child - he should grow up to be a Chasid, *yirei shamayim*, tzaddik, *osek b'tzorchei tzibbur* and on and on.

During the yechidus the Rebbe bentched him that "You should raise your children together with your wife, in a good mood". And that was it. No tzaddik, no talmid chacham — just together with your wife in a good mood.

Feeling slightly disappointed, Dr. Lazerson later recounted that only afterwards he realized what a powerful bracha that was. Stick together, be in a good mood and the rest will come.



I think of this story often while parenting. A mommy in a good mood is something not to be taken for granted - especially during this busy Pesach season. But how do we remain calm and even joyful, when there are so many triggers and stressors around us?

Here are 5 things that I am working on and you are more than welcome to join the relaxation journey.

1. Recently, I stumbled upon **Rabbi Shais Taub's** podcast, where he goes through *Shaar Habitachon* in over 40 light, easy-to-listen-to bites of inspiration. One takeaway was that if one has true trust in Hashem, we do what we can and then completely relax because Hashem has got it. Like completely relax.

2. This morning, all folks woke up cheerfully shortly after 6am, well rested and ready to tackle the day. Me? I was groggy and tired, up with the baby a few too many times. It's easy to feel resentful. Why do I have to wake up so many times? Maybe one could grumble: Why do I have to be home with the kids while my husband goes to learn? Why do I have to cook and clean constantly? Something I've learned from **Kayla Levin** (a Marriage Coach based in Israel) is that it's helpful to experiment with changing the words we tell ourselves. Instead of I have to - play with the words 'I want to'. I want to be the one nourishing my newborn through the night. I want my kids to see that Torah is priority. I want to serve my children

fresh, healthy food. No one's forcing us to do the things we do and by changing the words we tell ourselves, we can become a little calmer and even a little more positive

3. The other day, the baby wonderfully slept for a couple hours in the middle of the day. (Are you noticing a theme here?) I was glad to be able to do a number of tasks that had been vying for my attention but afterwards I was left with a harried feeling. I realized that I was trying to do too many things at the same time. Like the Rebbe who told the visitors who were edgy to catch their flight, that their plane home had not even been created yet; we can try to live in the moment too. Watch the soap suds as you are washing dishes. Smell the coffee beans as you're brewing. Say brachos from a siddur. One thing at a time can help us to feel more centered and relaxes as we go through our day.

4. Over time, we wire our mind to think certain thoughts and our brain naturally suggests those thoughts for us to ruminate upon when our mind is idle. Sara Chana Radcliffe calls this the Amazon theory. When you log onto your account, there's a list of items recommended for you based on your searches and previous purchases.

When you start browsing other items, your suggested purchases will change as well. When we begin changing our thoughts to more helpful and positive ones and refusing to think about the negative; slowly our brain becomes rewired and begins to offer us the more positive thoughts. When we begin to think 'what if' 'this is never gonna work' 'this is way too hard' shut those thoughts down and replace with 'I'm doing the best I can' or 'we're getting there' or 'this too shall pass'.

5. And finally, sit with yourself and think. What really lights me up? And

do more of that. When we are lit, we have the koach to light up our homes and beyond.

May we merit to celebrate this Pesach with the ultimate joy and calmness, with the arrival of Moshiach now! ■



### CREAMY CHICKEN SOUP

This soup was born on a chol hamoed afternoon when everyone was hungry and we had to make something from nothing. Creamy and satisfying, it turns out the best when made with some good old schmaltz.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 heaping tbsp schmaltz (or oil)
- 1 large onion
- 2 large zucchinis peeled and cubed
- 4 sweet potatoes peeled and cubed
- 4 potatoes peeled and cubed
- 3 pieces of leftover cooked chicken (or however much you have), cut into small pieces
- Salt

#### Directions:

Fry the onion in the schmaltz (or oil). Add diced vegetables and sauté for a couple minutes. Add water to cover and salt to taste. Bring to a boil and then simmer on a lower flame until everything is cooked. Add chicken and let cook for 10 more minutes. Blend or leave as is and enjoy warm!